

Captain Gordon,

Here is the information that the NTSB requested of your office.

Our time-line & observations before arriving at the scene of the Empress Of The North's grounding, while on site & when departing the scene.

0035 - Empress Grounding & USCG Pon-Pon call - Columbia about 8 miles SSE of Pt. Hugh Light ... Lat. 57 29.1W, Long. 132 43.9N Weather conditions: SSE @ 5 kts, Overcast skies, Temp. 46 F, Bar. 30.37" (please note that at the time of the grounding the M/V Columbia was on the opposite side of Admiralty Is, approximately 105 nautical miles away & could only hear USCG Sector JNU side of communications)

0336 - Approaching Pt. Hilda ... 12 to 6 Nav Watch called Captain, I ordered 200 shaft turns (hooked on), speed increased to 19 - 20 kts.

0346 - Nav Watch able to make contact with USCG, asked if our assistance was needed. Lat. 58 12.2W, Long. 134 39.2N, Weather conditions: ESE @ 20 kts, Light Rain, Temp. 47 F, Bar. 30.38"

0458 - West side of Pt. Retreat ... Lat. 58 24.5N, Long. 135 00.0W, Weather conditions: NNW @ 6 kts, Light Rain, Temp. 44 F, Bar. 30.28"

0547 - Rocky Is abeam & approaching site.

0554 - On Scene ... Lat. 58 09.9N, Long. 135 02.8W, Weather conditions: Light Airs, Overcast skies

0636 - USCG Cutter Liberty all fast alongside & commenced transferring passengers / crew through our Port vehicle door.

0840 - Transfer of passengers / crew complete from all vessels ... 252 souls taken aboard M/V Columbia.

0855 - USCG Cutter Liberty let go & got underway.

0905 - Departed Scene ... Lat. 58 09.2 N, Long. 135 00.5 W (we had drifted about 1.4 nm SE with the flood tide during the 3 hours on scene), Weather conditions: Lt Airs, Overcast skies, Temp. 52 F, Bar. 30.35"

1102 - All fast at our Auke Bay terminal, Empress of the North passengers / crew let ashore first.

Upon arrival on scene at 0547 - 11 vessels & 2 USCG Helicopters were at the site (one was sitting on the beach at Pr. Couverden). The 11 vessels were comprised of:

2 - Halibut fishing boats, both departing as we arrived ... one leaving to the North up Chatham Strait (blue hull) & the second headed South down Chatham Strait (gray hull) ... the Evening Star was one these vessels.

3 - USCG vessels, the cutter Liberty, the Liberty's RIB with two sailors aboard & USCG #47261.

3 - "Mini" Cruise Ships, the Spirit of Columbia, the Spirit of Yorktown & the Empress of the North ... the last two departed the scene together shortly after our arrival.

1 - Alaska State Trooper RIB vessel w/ blue hull.

1 - Tug & barge ... the Tiger towing a fuel barge, but was made up alongside barge.

1 - private sport boat about 28' long with no visible name.

Four of these vessels had passengers & crew aboard from the Empress of the North, they were: The Cutter Liberty (appx 140), the Tug Tiger (appx 30), the Spirit of Columbia (appx 60) & USCG #47261 (appx 22)

If you see something I may have missed please let me know.

Kind regards,
Capt. Phil Taylor